

# SYNCHRONIZATION IN PACKET NETWORKS: TIMING METRICS AND MONITORING

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## Abstract

*Packet Delay Variation (PDV) is a major impediment to transferring timing from a source (Master/Server) to destination (Slave/Client) over a packet-switched network. PDV directly affects frequency alignment (syntonization) and asymmetry of PDV impacts time alignment (phase). There is considerable interest in the industry to establish a relationship between PDV and the ability to recover time/phase/frequency via a packet-based method (e.g., PTP, NTP). Recent developments in PDV analysis have indicated that it is feasible to build accurate models of network behavior under varying conditions of load, number of switches, forwarding algorithms, QoS implementation, and so on. It has also been shown that no single metric (e.g., TDEV, minTDEV) is sufficient to characterize PDV and that a suite of metrics is necessary. Study of PDV also develops intuition and permits heuristic approaches to be devised that use nonlinear processing to filtering of the PDV, greatly enhancing the performance of clock recovery compared to linear PLL methods.*

*In this presentation, Brilliant will provide experimental results and demonstrate that: (1) Practice does indeed have relationship to theory. Proper measurements are indeed consistent, repeatable, and significantly predictable; (2) Proper heuristics and multiple metrics provide high-quality clock recovery and knowledge of the transport layer (e.g., GigE, xDSL) can be applied to improve performance.*

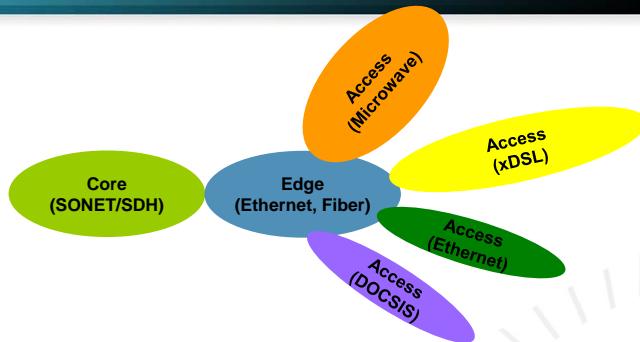
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## Implication of Network Evolution



- » Networks will be a hybrid of circuit-switched (i.e. legacy) segments and packet-switched segments
  - Circuit-switching good for real-time, delay-sensitive, low-bandwidth, continuous, 100%-duty-cycle traffic
  - Packet-switching good for non-real-time, delay-insensitive, high-bandwidth, bursty, low-duty-cycle traffic
- » TDM streams (e.g. DS1/E1) will be transported over packet-switched networks introducing Circuit/Packet boundaries

*Networks are heterogeneous; packet timing metrics must be flexible to account for different packet forwarding and media access*

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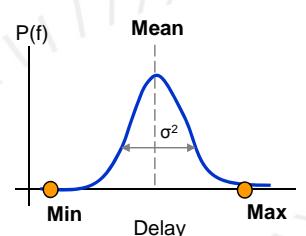
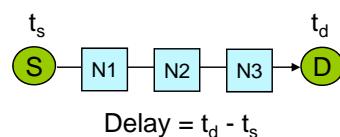
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## Packet Delay Variation Metrics



- » Metrics that characterize Packet Delay Variation (PDV) are computed from the sequence  $\{x_k\}$  of delay measurements:

- Probability density function (pdf) or cumulative distribution function (cdf) or histogram - all provide the same information related to amplitude, including:
  - Mean:  $x_{av}$  – Average of all values in the sequence  $x_k$
  - Variance:  $\sigma_x^2 = \langle x_k^2 \rangle - \langle x_k \rangle^2$  {  $\langle \rangle$  is the average}
  - Standard deviation: square root of variance
  - Minimum,  $x_{min}$ : largest value such that  $x_k > x_{min}$
  - Maximum-95,  $x_{max}$ : smallest value such that  $P[x_k < x_{max}] > 0.95$

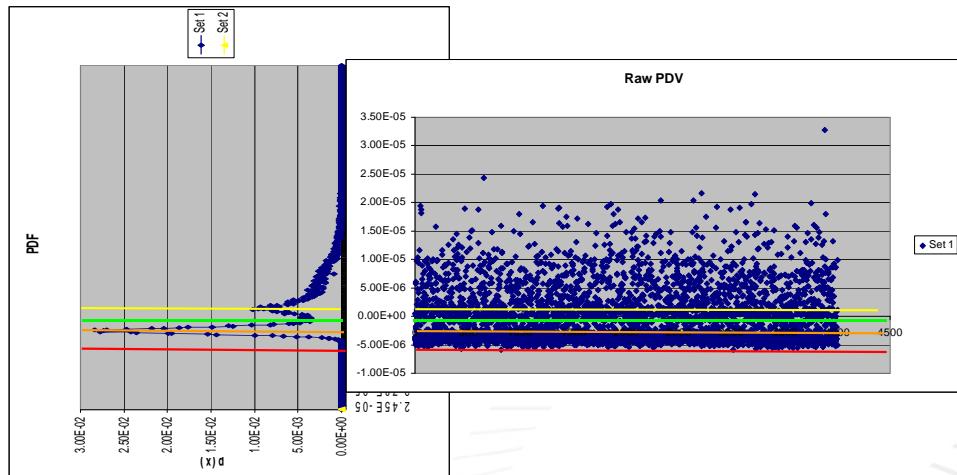


- Spectral metrics (e.g. TDEV) address temporal distribution
  - Implied sampling interval =  $t_0$  (packet interval)
  - TDEV is a measure of stability of the mean
  - minTDEV estimates stability of the minima

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## Interpreting Packet Delay Variation Charts

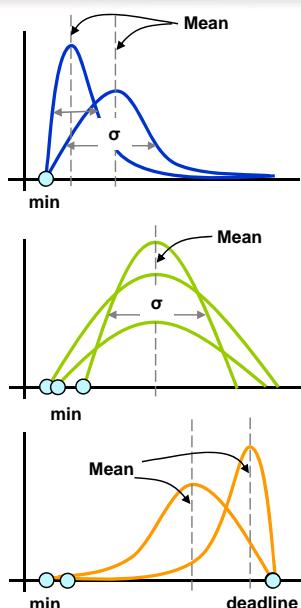


5 Switches 40% Load w/QoS – Multiple stable peaks in PDV pdf  
 min is always useful, but at high loads other metrics, if stable, may be used

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## The Need for Multiple Metrics



- » Hardware-based routing/switching
- » Forward packets as soon as possible
- » *min* is a good measure for moderate loads and hop counts
- » Point-to-point Media Access delays
- » Media Access time variability is minimized
- » *Mean* is a good metric, *min* is not
- » Software-based forwarding
- » Processes scheduled to meet real-time deadlines – “just in time” completion
- » Deadline (*max*) may be a more stable metric than *min* at high loads

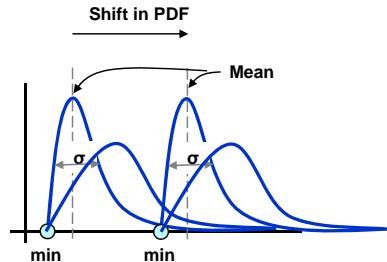
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## The Need for Multiple Metrics



- » Network Reconfiguration Detection

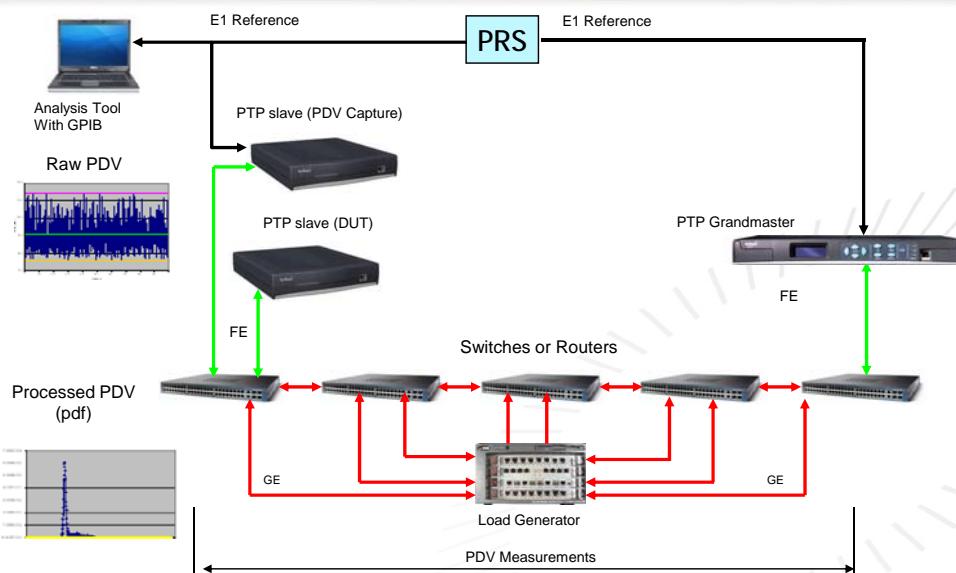


- » Discontinuity in *min* and *mean* is useful to detect network rearrangements
  - Network protection switching
  - Network additions/deletions/outages
- » Variance can be used to provide a measure of confidence of the detection
- » End-point Frequency and Phase must remain stable during revertive and non-revertive rearrangement scenarios

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## G.8261 Test Setup – PDV Analysis



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## PDV Measurement Tool

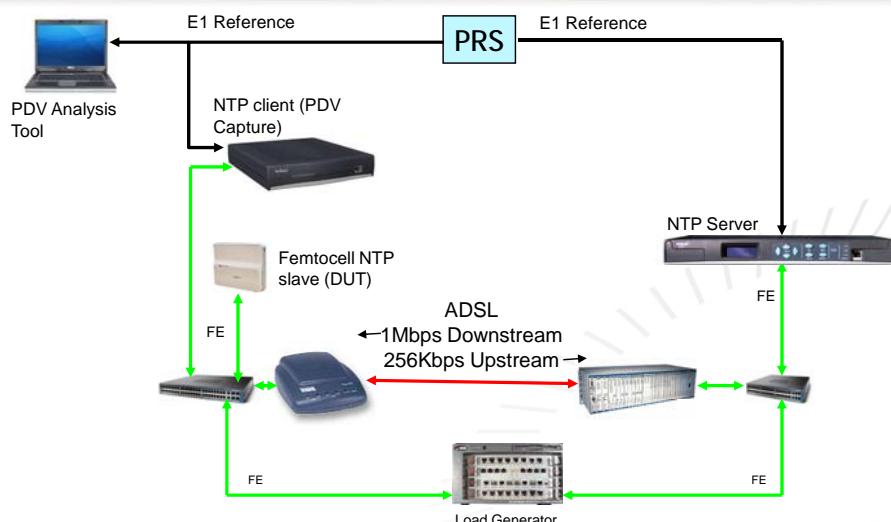


- » Measures PDV to 16ns resolution
- » Uses NTP or PTP
- » Logs PDV in Real Time
- » Off-line analysis and modeling
  - Provides ability to improve understanding of network behavior
  - Impact of load, Hop-Count, QoS and forwarding algorithms on network performance
- » Provides insight into the improvement of the time sync algorithms
  - Multiple Metrics – min, mean, max, variance

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## ADSL/Femtocell Test Setup



Maintain Femtocell Frequency (and Phase) accuracy over Asymmetric DSL

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